AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS:

Figures 17-20 have been designated with the legend "Conventional Art". This legend is consistent with the description at, for example, page 19, line 18 et seq. No new matter has been added and the Examiner is invited to independently confirm that this is the case.

Appendix: Annotated Drawing Sheets Showing Changes

Replacement Drawing Sheets

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject patent application are respectfully requested.

Applicants' representative wishes to thank Examiner Nguyen for the courtesy extended during the telephone interview discussing the subject patent application. The following remarks reflect the substance of the interview.

As required in the office action, Figures 17-20 have been designated with the legend "Conventional Art" based on the description at pages 19-20 of the specification, for example. Annotated Drawing Sheets Showing Changes and Replacement Drawing Sheets are included in the Appendix.

As discussed during the aforementioned interview, Applicants respectfully traverse the contention in the office action that the features of "the circuit different from the unit circuits is a unit circuit for a shift register of a different system" in claim 4 and "the circuits different from the unit circuits comprise unit circuits for a different shift register" are not shown in the figures of the subject patent application. By way of example and without limitation, Figure 11 shows a unit circuit F/F2(1) for second shift register SR2 disposed in the physical space between unit circuits F/F1(1) and F/F1(2) of a first shift register SR1. Claims 4 and 19 and their corresponding independent claims 1 and 17 have been amended to even more clearly set forth the relationships among the elements thereof. Consequently, withdrawal of the objection to the drawings as allegedly failing to show the features of claims 4 and 19 is respectfully requested.

Claims 17-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite because the claim 17 limitation that "circuits different from the unit circuits disposed in the physical spaces between adjacent unit circuits" may imply a single different circuit or plural different circuits. Claims 17-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 112, first paragraph, because the above-identified claim 17 limitation is allegedly not supported by the original disclosure. Also, the office action contends that the original disclosure does not expressly disclose a shift register block comprising circuits different from the unit circuits and that the original disclosure does not fairly teach that "the circuits different from the unit circuits comprise unit circuits for a different shift register" as recited in claim 19.

For the reasons set forth below, Applicants traverse these rejections of claims 17-20.

By way of example and without limitation, Figure 11 of the subject patent application shows a flip-flop F/F2(1) of a second shift register SR2 disposed in the physical space between flip-flops F/F1(1) and F/F1(2) of a first shift register SR1. By way of further example and without limitation, Figure 12 of the subject application shows a waveform processing circuit WR1(1), a flip-flop F/F2(1) of a second shift register SR2, and a waveform processing circuit WR2(1) disposed in the physical space between flip-flops F/F1(1) and F/F1(2) of a first shift register SR1. Thus, the original disclosure clearly provides support for a single different circuit or plural different circuits between the unit circuit of one shift register.

Moreover, as discussed during the interview, Applicants respectfully submit that whether the limitation "circuits different from the unit circuits disposed in the physical spaces between adjacent unit circuits" in claim 17 implies a single different circuit or plural different circuits between two adjacent unit circuits is a matter relating to claim scope, not indefiniteness. In other words, an assertion that a limitation can be read on one or plural different circuits does not in and of itself render the limitation indefinite.

With respect to the comments in the office action about a "shift register block" comprising circuits different from the unit circuits, Applicants have amended claim 17-19 to address this issue.

With respect to the comments in the office action that the original disclosure does not support the claim 19 recitation that "the circuits different from the unit circuits comprise unit circuits for a different shift register", Applicants again reference, for example, the above-mentioned amendments of claims 17-19 and Figure 11, which shows a flip-flop F/F2(1) of a second shift register SR2 disposed in the physical space between flip-flops F/F1(1) and F/F1(2) of a first shift register SR1.

For these reasons, Applicants respectfully request that the rejections based on 35 U.S.C. Section 112, first and second paragraphs, be withdrawn.

Claims 1-10 and 12-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 102(e) as allegedly being "anticipated" by Azami (U.S. Patent No. 6,702,407).

As discussed during the interview, claim 17, for example, describes unit circuits of a first shift register which are linearly disposed so that physical spaces are provided

between each adjacent pair of unit circuit, wherein circuits other than unit circuits of the first shift register are disposed in the physical spaces between adjacent circuit units. By way of example and without limitation, page 25, line 6 et seq.; page 27, line 14 et seq.; page 35, line 6 et seq.; and page 36, line 5 et seq. describe the physical layout of a shift register.

As further discussed during the interview, Applicants respectfully submit that Figure 3 of Azami (which is referenced in the office action) is a schematic representation and does not reflect the relative physical arrangement of the various components shown therein. In particular, Azami does not disclose (or even suggest) how components of a shift register should be arranged or laid out relative to one another and to other circuits. Moreover, even assuming it is erroneously argued that Figure 3 shows a physical arrangement, the inverters and NAND gates are not disposed in the physical space between adjacent flip-flops. Consequently, Azami does not disclose the physical arrangement specified in claim 17 and therefore cannot anticipate claim 17 or any of its dependent claims.

Independent claims 1, 8, 9 and 13 have been amended to even more clearly set forth the physical layout of the components recited therein. Because Azami does not disclose (or even suggest) how components of a shift register should be arranged or laid out relative to one another and to other circuit components, Azami cannot anticipate these claims or the claims that depend therefrom.

Claim 11 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 103(a) as allegedly being made "obvious" by Azami. Applicants traverse the contentions in the office action that the features of claim 11 would have been obvious in view of Azami. In any event, Azami is deficient with respect to the physical layout specified in claim 9, from which claim 11 depends. Consequently, Applicant submits that claim 11 patentably distinguishes from Azami.

The pending claims are believed to be allowable and favorable office action is respectfully requested. Should the Examiner feel that further discussion would facilitate allowance of this application, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

NIXON & VANDERHYE P.C.

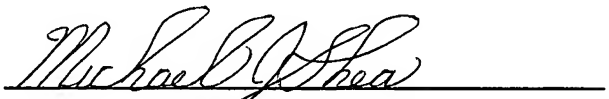
By: 

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FIG. 17 Conventional Art

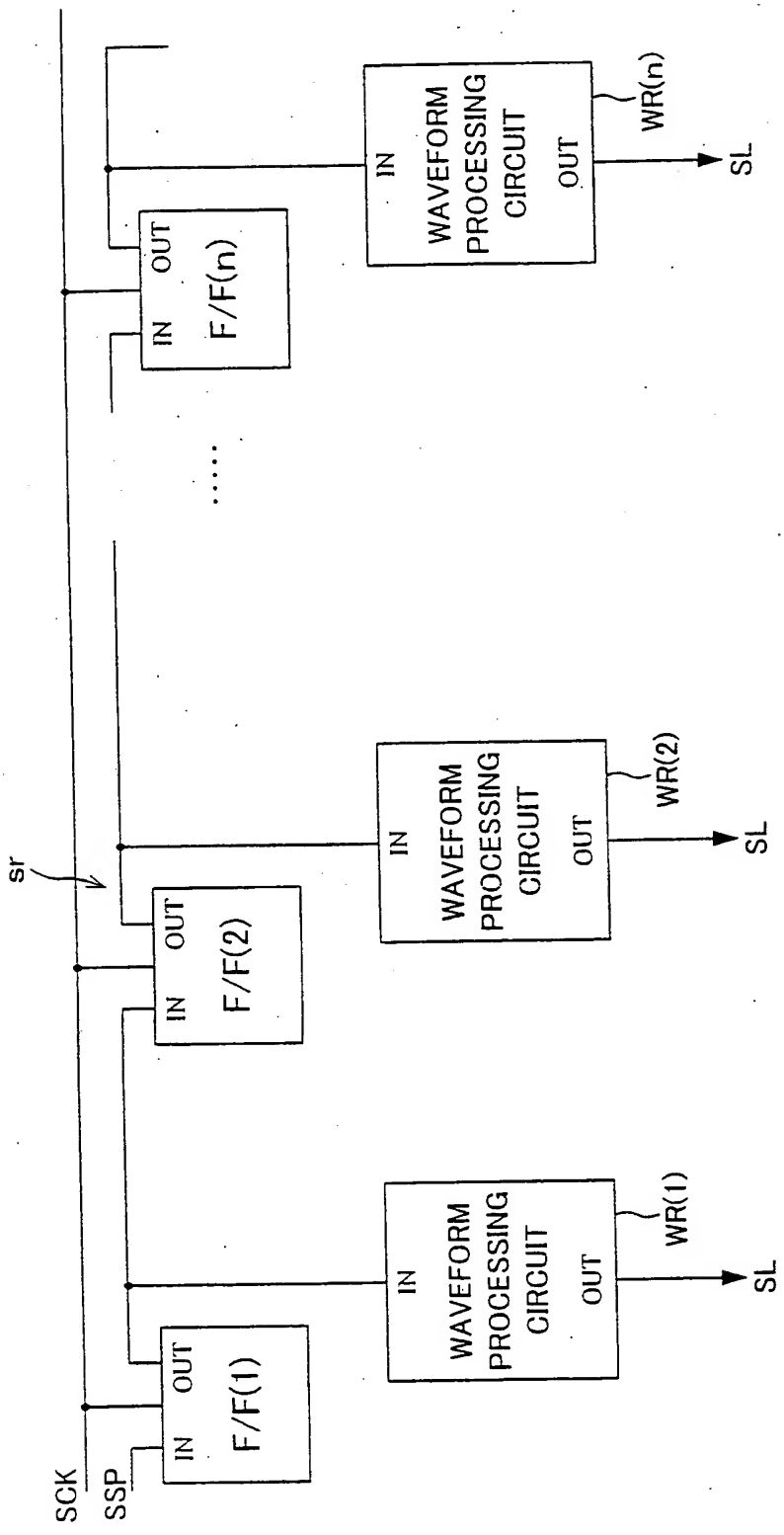

FIG. 18 Conventional Art

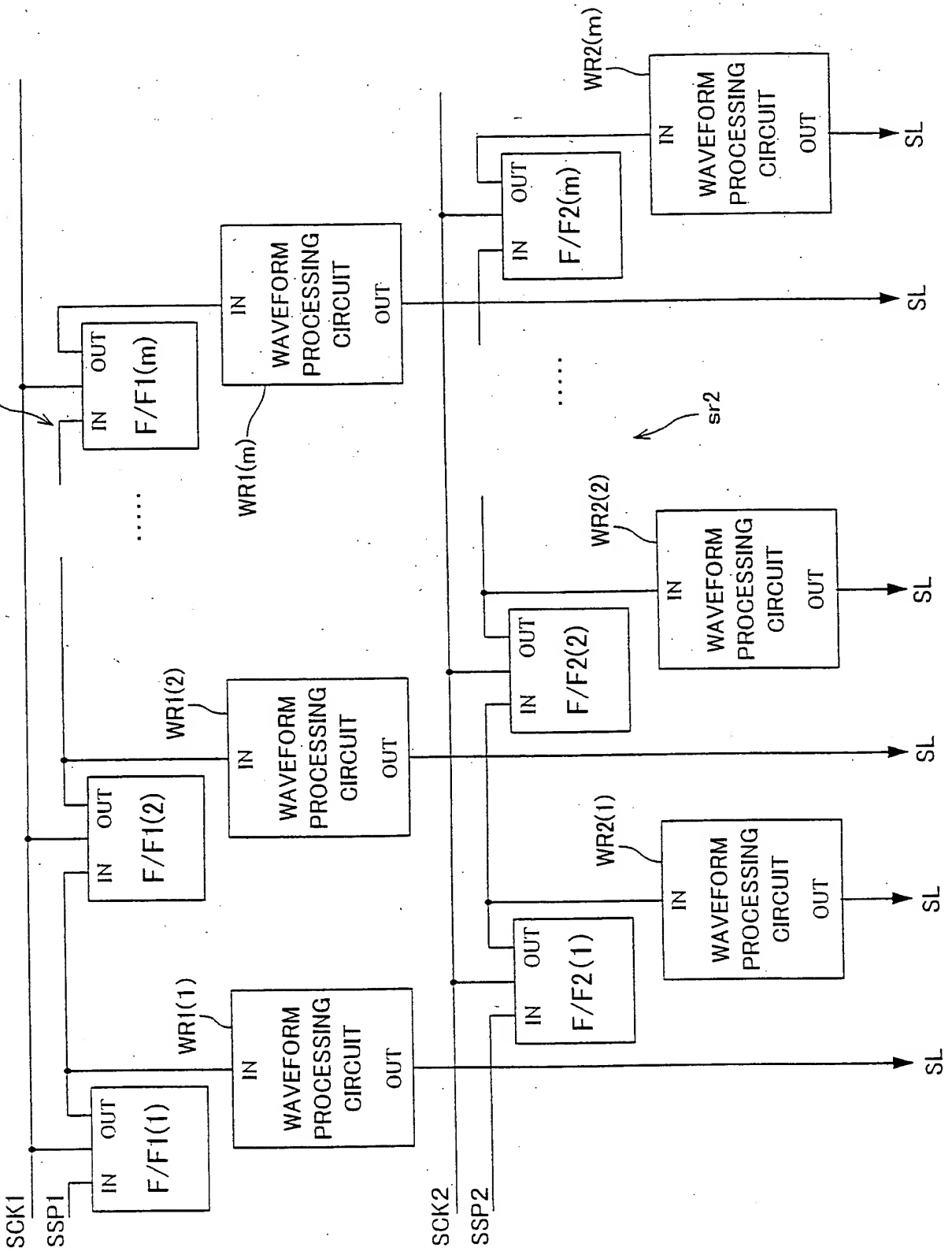

FIG. 19 Conventional Art

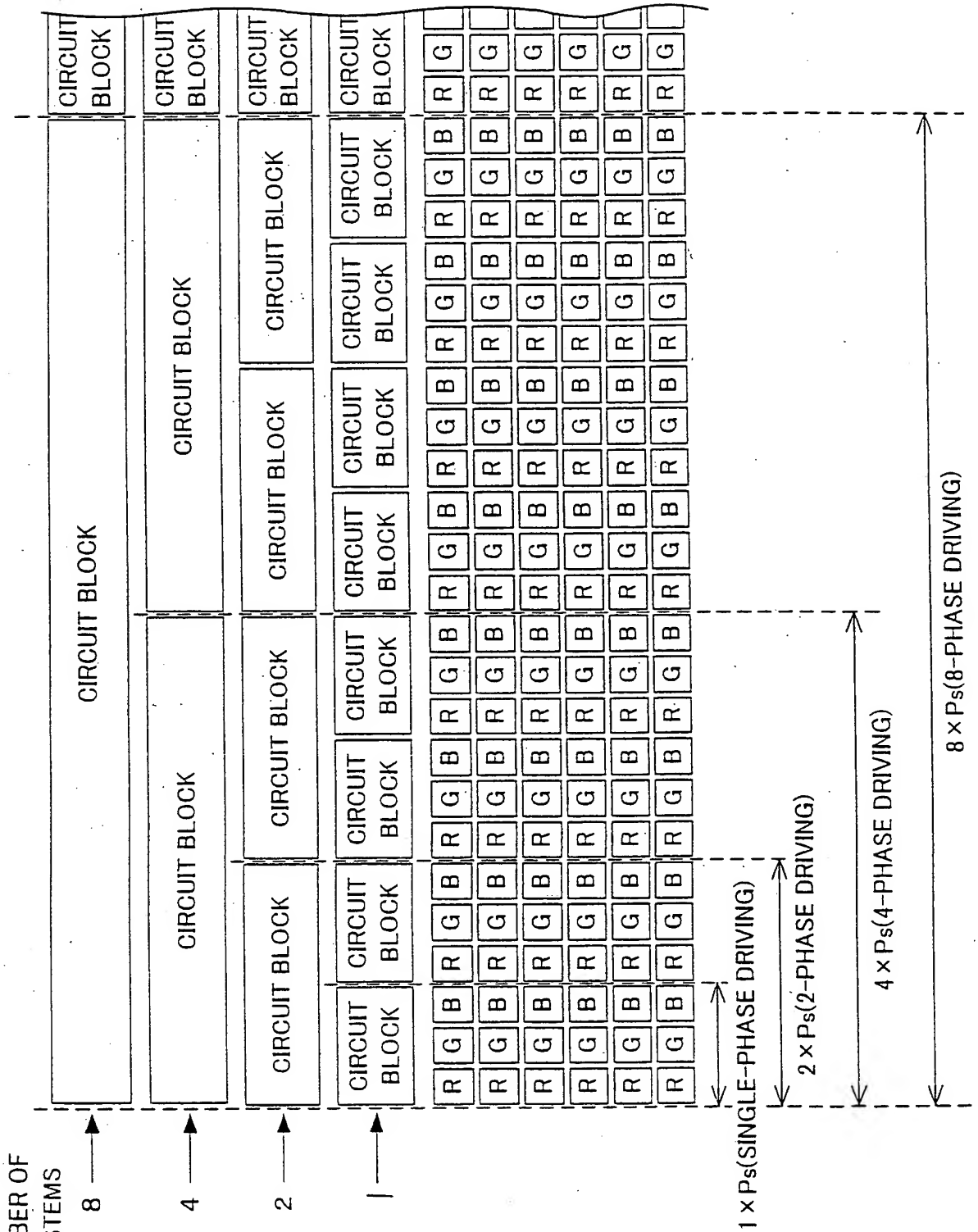

FIG. 20
Conventional Art